

MAY 21 1964

CUBAN EXILES RECRUITING DRIVE IS REPORTED

CIA Said to Have Role in Training at Secret Camps

By RICHARD DUDMAN
A Washington Correspondent of
the Post-Dispatch

WASHINGTON, May 21 — Cuban exiles are being recruited in this country in preparation for possible new action against the Castro regime, the Post-Dispatch was told today.

Agents are instructing the exiles to go to secret training camps in Nicaragua and Costa Rica, a usually well informed source said. The camps are said to be under the command of Manuel Artime, who was hand-picked by the Central Intelligence Agency to lead the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961.

Other sources here spoke cryptically of a high-level "co-ordination" of Artime's raid on the sugar port of Pilon in Oriente province last Wednesday and the reported raids and infiltration landings on the north and south coasts this week.

Competing Groups

There was a widespread belief among exile leaders and other observers that the CIA or possibly the newer Defense Intelligence Agency was taking part in the planning and timing of the various raids.

Reports that the different exile efforts were being co-ordinated seemed intended to offset other reports that the various groups were competing for leadership should Premier Fidel Castro be overthrown.

Some of the other leaders continued to accuse Artime of being a reactionary and of being too willing to accept CIA direction.

Artime's associates, on the other hand, have been critical of Manuel Ray and Maj. Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo, leaders of other groups reported to have landed small infiltration parties on the Cuban coast in the last few days. Those leaders, who defected from the Castro regime relatively recently, have been accused of advocating "Fidelismo without Fidel," or seeking to keep Cuban socialism after overthrowing Castro.

Ray's Junta Revolucionaria (JURE) is seeking to take over leadership of an underground movement in Cuba. The 38-year-old former minister of public works under Castro is reported to have set out for Cuba in fulfillment of a public promise a year ago to return to lead the fight against the Premier.

Gutierrez Menoyo, who was a guerrilla commander with Castro, heads a group called the Second Front of the Escambray. His men fought the Fulgencio Batista dictatorship in the mountains of central Cuba while Castro operated in the Sierra Maestra in the east.

Paul Bethel, an American citizen who is executive secretary of an organization here called the Citizens Committee for a Free Cuba, said that he spoke with Gutierrez Menoyo last week at a base in the Caribbean. Bethel would identify the base only as "Cay Esperanda"—or "Reef of Hope"—and said that its location must remain secret.

'Stole Our Revolution'

Bethel issued a statement by Gutierrez Menoyo expressing confidence that the Cuban people would rise against Castro and asserting that "very, very soon we are prepared to deal a strong

blow to the Communists who stole our revolution."

Another statement, from Rogelio Cisneros, Ray's chief assistant, also issued by Bethel, said final victory depended on the efforts of all Cubans—"those who live abroad in exile and those fighting and dying inside Cuba today."

"The Castro regime is demoralized," the Cisneros statement said. "The resistance of the Cuban people, when added to the industrial decay of the Communist regime, makes it possible to carry the war to Cuba and to pursue it to final victory on Cuban soil."

Bethel said that the statement was intended as a warning not to expect big landings or quick victory. He said that the timetable of the raids and harassment of the Castro regime called for its overthrow in December, or possibly early next year.

Supplies Stockpiled

Describing preparations for the raids, Bethel said that food, supplies and water were first stockpiled on small islands, some actually Cuban territory. Sometimes Cuban peasants or even government officials were spirited out for an hour or two for help in planning the raids.

He said that the schedule of infiltration and raiding was about 60 per cent complete and the chances of ultimate success were about 60 per cent.

At the same time, Bethel reported that a "referendum" among Cuban exiles was nearly completed. Exiles are being asked to vote by mail on a proposed committee of five leaders who will then be able to speak for the exiles as a group. He said that it is being made clear that the committee would not be a government in exile.

Bethel described his committee as a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization of American citizens. It operates in a modest suite of offices in downtown Washington. In past months, much of its work has been to report activities of the Cuban underground and difficulties of the Castro regime.

Bethel was a foreign service officer in the Department of State and the United States Information Agency for 12 years until he resigned in November 1961. He was public affairs officer in the United States Embassy in Havana in the last months of the Batista regime and the first months of the Castro regime in 1959.

STAT